

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of predicting the geographic location of a user of a communication network based on the user's network address, the method comprising a computer system having an operatively interconnected processor, memory and communications interface the steps of:

~~(1)-obtaining and storing~~ via a communications network and the communications interface, data purportedly disclosing the respective geographic locations of a plurality of users of the communications network;

storing the geographic location data in the memory of the computer system;

~~(2)-obtaining and storing the~~ a respective network addresses for each of the plurality of users;

storing each of the network addresses in the memory of the computer system;

and

~~(3) operating the processor of the computer system to correlate~~ correlating the stored geographic location data with the stored network address data and to generate predictive data predicting the identifying a predicted geographic location for a network address based on the stored geographic location data for multiple users;

storing the predictive data in the memory; and

operating the processor to reference the predictive data stored in the memory and to identify a predicted geographic location of a particular user of the

communications network as a function of the a network address through which the particular user accesses the communications network.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the predictive data comprises, for each network address, a predicted geographic area and a rating of the likelihood that the predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who access the network through that network address.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the predictive data comprises, for each network address, a plurality of overlapping predicted geographic areas of increasing size, and, for each such geographic area, a rating of the likelihood that the predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who access the network through that network address.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein said plurality of geographic areas of increasing size comprise at least a city and a state.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said geographic location data comprises one or more of a home or business address and a telephone number.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~step (1)~~ obtaining the geographic location data comprises obtaining said geographic location data voluntarily from said users.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 wherein said network is the Internet and ~~step (1)~~ obtaining the geographic location data comprises operating a website on the Internet and asking users of the website to self report their geographic locations.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 wherein ~~step (1)~~ obtaining the geographic location data comprises requiring users of the website to self report their geographic locations in order to utilize a service provided through said website.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said geographic location data comprises the users' self reported addresses.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~step (2)~~ obtaining the network addresses comprises reading and storing at a node of the network the network address of users who access data at that node through the network.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising ~~the steps of:~~
~~(4)~~ obtaining data indicative of the integrity of the geographic location data; and
wherein ~~step (3)~~ correlating the geographic location data with the network address data further comprises further correlating the geographic location data and network address data with the integrity data to generate a rating of the likely accuracy of the predictive geographic location data.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the predictive data comprises, for each network address, a plurality of overlapping predicted geographic areas of increasing size, and, for each such geographic area, a rating of the likelihood that the predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who access the network through that network address.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 wherein ~~step (1)~~ said obtaining and storing data purportedly disclosing the geographic location of a plurality of users of the network comprises obtaining said geographic location data voluntarily from said users.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13 wherein said network is the Internet and ~~step (1)~~ obtaining the geographic location data comprises operating a website on the Internet and asking users of the website to self report information indicative of their geographic locations.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the website provides a service whereby users of said website transact business with other users of said website and further wherein users of said website provide feedback information to said website about other users of the website with whom they have transacted business indicative of the integrity of the other users and wherein the integrity data comprises said feedback information.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein an entity sells goods via the website and requires a user, when purchasing goods, to self report an address to which the user wishes the goods to be shipped and a payment vehicle to which the cost of the goods is to be charged and wherein the integrity data comprises a rating based on a correlation of the self reported ship to address and a billing address for the payment vehicle.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer readable product embodied on computer readable media readable by a computing device for predicting the geographic location of a user of a communication network based on the user's network address, said product comprising computer executable instructions for:

obtaining and storing data purportedly disclosing the respective geographic locations of a plurality of users of the communication network;

obtaining and storing the a respective network addresses for each of the plurality of users;

correlating the stored geographic location data with the stored network address data and to generate predictive data predicting the identifying a predicted geographic location for a network address based on the stored geographic location data for multiple users;

identifying a predicted geographic location of a particular user of the communications network as a function of the a network address through which the particular user accesses the communication network.

18. (Original) The product of claim 17 wherein the predictive data comprises, for each network address, a predicted geographic area and a rating of the likelihood that the predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who access the network through that network address.

19. (Original) The product of claim 18 wherein the predictive data comprises, for each network address, a plurality of overlapping predicted geographic areas of increasing size, and, for each such geographic area, a rating of the likelihood that the predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who access the network through that network address.

20. (Original) The product of claim 19 wherein said plurality of geographic areas of increasing size comprise at least a city, a state, and a country.

21. (Original) The product of claim 17 wherein said geographic location data comprises the users' self reported addresses.

22. (Original) The product of claim 17 further comprising:
computer executable instructions for obtaining data indicative of the integrity of the geographic location data; and

wherein the computer executable instructions for correlating further comprises computer executable instructions for further correlating the geographic location data and network address data with the integrity data to generate a rating of the likely accuracy of the predictive geographic location data.

23. (Original) The product of claim 22 wherein the predictive data comprises, for each network address, a plurality of overlapping predicted geographic areas of increasing size, and, for each such geographic area, a rating of the likelihood that the predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who access the network through that network address.

24. (Original) The product of claim 23 wherein the integrity data comprises data provided by users of a website about other users of the website with whom they have transacted business that is indicative of the integrity of the other users.

25. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of predicting the geographic location of a user of the Internet who visits a Website on the Internet based on the user's an Internet Protocol address, the method being performed by a computer system having an operatively interconnected processor and, the method comprising the steps of:

(1)-obtaining and storing in the memory data purportedly disclosing the geographic location of a plurality of users of the network who visit the website;

(2)-obtaining and storing the network addresses of the plurality of users;

(3)-the processor correlating the geographic location data with the network address data to generate predictive data ~~predicting the~~ associating geographic locations ~~of a user of the network as a function of the user's network~~ with an Internet Protocol address based on geographic locations of multiple users through which the user accesses the network; and

~~(4)~~when a particular user of the network visits the website, referencing the stored predictive data to identify a predicted ~~predicting the user's~~ geographic location for the particular user based on an Internet Protocol address through which the user accesses the network and the predictive geographic location data; and storing in the memory the predicted geographic location for the particular user.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 further comprising ~~the step of:~~

~~(5)~~providing geographically targeted advertising to users who visit a website on the Internet based on the predictive geographic location data.

27. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein the predictive data comprises, for each network address, a predicted geographic area and a rating of the likelihood that the predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who access the network through that network address.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein the predictive data comprises, for each network address, a plurality of overlapping predicted geographic areas of increasing size, and, for each such geographic area, a rating of the likelihood that the predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who access the network through that network address.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 wherein ~~step (1)~~ obtaining and storing data purportedly disclosing the geographic location of a plurality of users of the network who visit the website comprises obtaining said geographic location data voluntarily from said users.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29 wherein ~~step (1)~~ obtaining and storing data purportedly disclosing the geographic location of a plurality of users of the network who visit the website comprises asking users of the website to self report their geographic locations.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30 wherein ~~step (1)~~ obtaining and storing data purportedly disclosing the geographic location of a plurality of users of the network who visit the website comprises requiring users of the website to self report their geographic locations in order to utilize a service provided through said website.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30 wherein ~~step (2)~~ obtaining and storing the network addresses of the plurality of users comprises reading and storing at a node of the network the network address of users who accesses that node.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29 further comprising ~~the step of:~~
~~(6)~~ obtaining data indicative of the integrity of the geographic location data; and
wherein ~~step (3)~~ correlating the geographic location data with the network address data
further comprises further correlating the geographic location data and network address
data with the integrity data to generate a rating of the likely accuracy that the predictive
geographic location data.

34. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the predictive data comprises, for
each network address, a plurality of overlapping predicted geographic areas of
increasing size, and, for each such geographic area, a rating of the likelihood that the
predicted geographic area accurately reflects the geographic location of users who
access the network through that network address.

35. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein the website provides a service
whereby users of said website transact business with other users of said website and
further wherein users of said website provide feedback information to said website
about other users of the website with whom they have transacted business indicative of
the integrity of the other users and wherein the integrity data comprises said feedback
information.

36. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein an entity sells goods via the website and requires a user, when purchasing goods, to self report an address to which the user wishes the goods to be shipped and a payment vehicle to which the cost of the goods is to be charged and wherein the integrity data comprises a rating based on a correlation of the self reported ship to address and a billing address for the payment vehicle.